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AUTHOR Hueston, Stephen P.
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ABSTRACT

Designed for high school world history courses, this classroom simulation recreates the power politics within the Roman Republic between 120 B.C. and the Battle of Actium in 31 B.C. Following an introduction which places the game in historical context, game preparation procedure is described. This includes assignment of Roman names, explanation of the political action cards around which game activity revolves, and point allocation. The steps and rules involved in the operation of the simulation are explained in separate sections. The six steps include selection of political action cards, foreign wars, establishment of an army, resolution of political action, resolution of war, and awarding of points. A selection of Roman names, a list of historical wars, and additional instructional notes are included in appendices. (LP)

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DEATH OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

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DEATH OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

This model was designed to recreate the basic power politics within the Roman Republic during last century before the battle of Actium in 31 BC. Prior to this battle, in which Octavius defeated Mark Anthony and claimed sole power, dictators could only claim temporary control of Rome. Men like Marius and Sulla came and went. When one dictator was in control at home a future one would be out winning wars. Building a power base to make their own claim to leadership. In the case of the First Triumvirate, Pompey gained his power base on the field of battle while Julius Caesar and Crassus forged their power bases out of domestic political maneuvering.

This model, while not tied to any historical events, begins in about the year 120 BC. Marius is about to rise to power as the champion of the people as the general who defeated the Cimbri and the Teutons.

Each turn represents a variable amount of time ranging from one year to a generation. This variablity reflects the amount of time needed to recover from the ravages of events.

INITIAL SET UP

Each person in the class should be given a roman name to help get them into the spirit of things. In APPENDIX A: I have enclosed a list of names. Each student is a Senator and as such is the Head of a political faction. This is symbolized by giving each student a Power Base of one. One Polticial Action Card is awarded for each Power Base Point.

There are four Political Action Cards. Two of them are offensive in nature and two are defensive. The two offensive ones are Assassination and Indictment. Both of these involve the blatant attempt to physically destroy one's opponents. The first by hiring assassins to kill them. The second by bringing them to trial and having the state chop off their head. In both cases much of their personal wealth and power could end up in your hands.

To us today these may not seem like legitimate political activities, but in Rome violence and demagogery were the norm rather than the exception. And like they say, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do."

To prevent either of these events from occuring there are two defensive cards, Bodyguard and the Mob. A Bodyguard can protect you from an Assassination attempt, while the Mob can be incited to riot, bringing pressure on magistrates, in an effort to insure your acquittal.

With one Political Action Card, there is little a single person can do to protect themselves. The most logical result is for individuals to combine into larger power groups that can provide group protection.

Note: Power Base Points and the number of Political Action Cards awarded are equal in STEP ONE. However, during the other six steps the numbers need not be equal.

OPERATION OF MODEL

STEP ONE

Faction leaders (with the advice of their faction members) select Political Action Cards equal to the member's collective Power Bases. On the first turn, one card is awarded per member. On subsequent turns the number, each student is entitled to, can go up.

STEP TWO

Foreign wars are announced along with their severity. These are determined by the roll of a die. If 1 through 3 is the result then there will be 1 war. On a 4 or a 5 there are 2 wars and if a 6 is rolled then there will be 3 wars. The severity of each war is determined by another die roll. If there are 2 or 3 wars each has a severity of 1. If there is only 1 war then it can have a severity of from 1 to 3. If the die roll is 1 or 2 then it has a severity of 1. A result of 3 or 4 yields a severity of 2 and a 5 or 6 means a severity of 3.

STEP THREE

The Senate votes on who the generals will be. Each person gets 1 vote as everyone is a Senator. Volunteers are called for, then a vote is taken to decide among the volunteers. If there is a tie then a die will be cast to determine a single winner. A seperate vote is

taken for each war and no one may fight in more than one. If one person in a faction gets the command they may bring along as many other senators as wish to go. There are 3 legions available for military duty. The generals decide amongst themselves how many each will get. Each general is guaranteed one legion, however, all three may be used.

STEP FOUR

Those factions, not involved in a war, resolve action against other factions in a random sequence determined by a drawing of names out of a hat. If two or more students are combined into a single faction they should select a faction leader who resolves action for the entire faction at one time. The faction drawn is the phasing faction.

Political actions are resolved in the following manner. The phasing faction leader may choose to do nothing and play shifts to the next faction called, or the phasing faction may attack one or more individuals. Using an offensive political action card the leader picks out one individual, who did not go to war, and plays it against that person. If that person or the faction that that person belongs to cannot produce a defensive card to stop the attack then that person is eliminated. However, if the correct defensive card is played then the attacked player is not eliminated.

Cards, both offensive and defensive, are lost once they have been played. Thus a single person faction with only one card could stop one attack but never two. The phasing faction leader may then play any other offensive card held by the faction. This card is resolved in the same fashion as the first card. Play thus continues until the phasing faction leader decides to stop or runs out of offensive political action cards.

Play continues until all factions have had a chance to resolve political action. Players eliminated before their turn get no turn. Eliminated players are only removed from the game for that turn. At the beginning of the next turn they are resurected and given a Power Base of one. A faction which eliminates another player recieves, as a reward for it's efforts, one additional Power Base point for use during all subsequent turns. Thus not only do factions with multiple players gain from having the use of several players cards, but as the players increase their Power Base, the total number of cards that a faction is entitled to can climb dramatically. Factions with multiple players must divide amongst themselves any cards gained in this fashion.

STEP FIVE

Wars are resolved in following manner. If the number of legions used by the general is equal to the severity level of the war then that general has a fifty-fifty chance of winning the war. The general rolls one die and if the result is 4 or higher then the general wins, less than 4 means that the general lost. If extra legions are brought along then victory can be achieved on a die roll of less than 4 (1 extra legion lowers the number to 3 and if 2 extra legions are brought along then only a 2 is needed). If the war is lost then each person who went to war has a chance of dying. Each person rolls one die and if a 1 is rolled then they are eliminated (this is the same as political action elimination, forcing them to start over again on the next turn with a Power Base of one).

If the war is won then the general personally gains a temporary political advantage at home for the next turn. This increase is only for use during the next turn and then is lost. The number of these cards is equal to the die roll that resolved the war (normally 4, 5 or 6).

STEP SIX

Generals return home. Victorius ones are awarded a Triumph and dead ones have their ashes interned in their family mausoleums.

STEP SEVEN

All cards are returned to the Treasury (the instructor) and the legions are returned to the control of the Senate. Play then reverts to STEP ONE.

APPENDIX A: LIST OF NAMES

Roman names are often very confusing to us and some explanation of them might be helpful. Most important romans had three names and they could be known by anyone of them. For example Gaius Julius Caesar is the full name of the man assassinated by the republicans in 44 BC. Gaius is his familiar name, much like our own first names. History does not refer to him as such too often, however. His second name Julius is the name of his Gens or family. Though not commonly called Julius many romans were known by their family name, especially if they acted as the head of their family. The third name is the one most commonly used and is the most confusing of them all. It is used much like a nickname. Often times it was awarded to celebrate some special event such as the conquest of Germany, hence Germanicus. The biggest problem with them is that they can be changed almost at whim. With this in mind a student can be given a name drawn from a list including first names, Gens names and nicknames.

Masculine names:

Gaius, Marcus, Aemilius, Tiberius, Lucius, Octavius, Marius, Sextus, Julius, Drusus, Livius, Scribonius, Claudius, Flavius, Scipius, Antonius, Brutus, Cassius, Cornelius, Marius, Pompeius (Pompey), Crassus, Lepidus, Sulla, Caesar, Gallicus, Nero, Augustus.

Any of these except the last five can be converted in a feminine name by having it end in `ia'. Marcus becomes Marcia and Octavius becomes Octavia. Women were rarely awarded a third name. Though they might retain their maiden Gens name as a third name. Girl's names can be created by ending the name with `illa'; thus creating Livilla and Julilla.

APPENDIX B: HISTORICAL WARS

Jugurthine War in North Africa 111-105 BC; Severity 2.

First Mithridatic War in Turkey 88-84 BC; Severity 1.

Second Mithridatic War in Turkey 83-81 BC; Severity 3.

Third Mithridatic War in Turkey 74-63 BC; Severity 1.

Revolt of Sparticus in Italy 73-71 BC; Severity 3.

Gallic Wars in France 58-54 BC;

3 Wars of Severity 1 each.

Parthian War in Iran 53 BC; Severity 3.

Revolt in Gaul in France 53-51 BC; Severity 2.

APPENDIX C: INSTRUCTOR NOTES

One action, which is not mentioned in the rules, which should be made possible, is the use, by a returning general, of a legion. The general with the largest force at his command in STEP SIX may use his army like a deck of Assassination cards. Any number of players may be eliminated in one stroke. The students should not be told about this option, but if any one suggests this use then it should be allowed. The proscriptions of Sulla being the primary example of this action.